



# NASA Policy Directive

**NPD 3410.2E**

Effective Date: August 19, 2003

Expiration Date: August 19, 2008

**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**[Printable Format \(PDF\)](#)

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## **Subject: Employee and Organizational Development**

**Responsible Office: Training and Development Division**

### **1. Policy**

To support the full utilization of the NASA workforce in achieving NASA's strategic outcomes and managing its human capital in implementing the President's Management Agenda, it is NASA policy to make training and developmental opportunities widely available to employees to enhance individual capabilities and competencies; build and retain a skilled and effective workforce; improve organizational performance; and maintain scientific, professional, technical, and management proficiency. More specifically, NASA policy is as follows:

- a. Use on-the-job training through selected work experiences as the primary method of developing the job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees.
- b. Support systematic plans to broaden employees' knowledge and skills through mentoring and coaching, and planned, work-related developmental assignments including on-the-job training, rotational assignments, and non-NASA work experiences.
- c. Use formal training and educational experiences to complement work experiences and to achieve better organizational and individual performance.
- d. Provide new supervisors with at least 40 hours of supervisory and management training within 6 months of the assignment, 80 hours within the first 2 years, advanced training for all supervisors and managers as needed, and continual development and training for senior executives. Examples of topics covered in the supervisory and management training may include NASA Strategy and Vision, Managing Performance, Management Practices and Multirater Assessment Feedback, Equal Opportunity and Diversity, Strategic Alliances, and Managing Change.
- e. Support employee training, retraining, mentoring and coaching, and organizational development activities leading to better ways of delivering services, improving work performance, and increasing the value of employee contributions to current and future Agency missions.
- f. Use foreign-owned training organizations for NASA employees only when it is fully justified by a requirement that cannot be met by domestically owned organizations or when there is a distinct advantage to the Agency.
- g. Permit participation in vendor promotional training to the extent permitted by referenced ethics and travel regulations.
- h. Permit NASA contractor personnel to attend authorized and scheduled NASA training, provided that space is available and such attendance does not deny Government trainees the training. The training must be necessary for Government purposes. The authority for training of contractors is not in training law; it is in the authority to administer contracts. Contractors may only be trained in skills that they are not required to bring to the job. It may be permissible for NASA contractor employees to attend sessions under these guidelines without directly reimbursing the Agency if there is a benefit to the Agency or a governmental interest for such attendance.
- i. Require employees selected for training in excess of 80 hours to complete a continued service agreement before assignment to either Government or non-Government training and development programs. For training less than 80 hours, a continued service agreement is not required. The employee shall agree to continue in the service of NASA after the end of the training period for a period equal to at least three times the length of the training/development. Repayment of the direct costs of the training, including travel and per diem expenses, is required if the employee voluntarily separates from NASA prior to completion of the agreed-upon time period as outlined in the continued service agreement. Employees are not required to repay their salary or other compensation. Employees may also be responsible for reimbursing NASA for any training costs for courses that are not successfully completed. Under certain circumstances, NASA may determine that it should waive its right to recovery if repayment would be against

equity and good conscience or is in the public interest, and release the employee from the agreement. The employee may request a reconsideration of the recovery amount or appeal for a waiver of the Agency's right to recover. The Agency may waive an employee's obligation under the continued service agreement if the employee leaves NASA for the service of another agency in any branch of the Government.

j. Permit the use of appropriated or other available funds to select and assign an employee to academic training; pay or reimburse the costs of academic degree training if the training is part of an Agency employee development program that is linked to accomplishing the strategic goals of the Agency and contributes significantly to meeting an identified Agency training need or resolves a staffing problem; and is provided by a college or university that is accredited by a nationally recognized body. Training may not be used for the sole purpose of providing an employee an opportunity to obtain an academic degree or qualify for appointment to a particular position for which the academic degree is a basic requirement. Merit selection procedures, as outlined in 5 CFR 335-103(b)(3) and 5 CFR part 300, subpart A, must be used to select employees for an authorized academic degree program when completion of the program will result in promotion to another position. This authority may not be used to qualify for a noncareer Senior Executive appointment or for an appointment excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position.

k. Permit the use of appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to pay for expenses for employees to obtain professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, professional certification, and examinations to obtain such credentials. This authority may be used where it is beneficial to the development and enhanced job performance of employees in support of administration management objectives and mission goals. This authority may not be exercised on behalf of any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position. Criteria for payment of expenses to obtain professional credentials should be applied consistent with merit system principles, as set forth in 5 U.S.C. § 2301, to achieve better organizational and individual performance. Examples that may warrant payment of professional licenses and credentials may include circumstances such as payment of a professional license or credential in a hard-to-fill strategic workforce competency or as a retention tool for a mission critical competency. All criteria shall be reviewed at regular intervals, as established. Center Directors, or a designee, may use appropriated funds to pay expenses to obtain professional credentials at their respective Centers.

## **2. Applicability**

This NPD applies to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities, except the Office of the Inspector General, which may implement the policy through its own personnel authority.

## **3. Authority**

- a. 42 U.S.C. 2473, National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.
- b. 5 U.S.C. § 4101, et seq., Government Employees Training Act.
- c. 5 U.S.C. § 5757, Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials.
- d. 5 U.S.C. § 4107, Academic Degree Training.
- e. 5 U.S.C. §§ 3391-3397, Appointment, Reassignment, Transfer, and Development in the Senior Executive Service.

## **4. References**

- a. 5 U.S.C. § 2301 et seq., Merit System Principles.
- b. Executive Order 11348, Providing for the Further Training of Government Employees, dated April 20, 1967.
- c. 5 CFR Part 410, Training.
- d. 5 CFR Part 2635, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch.
- e. 5 CFR Part 412, Executive, Management, and Supervisory Development.
- f. 41 CFR Chapter 304, Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses.
- g. NASA Strategic Human Capital Plan (SHCP).

## **5. Responsibility**

- a. The Administrator establishes Agency policy for individual and organizational development training programs. The

Administrator retains the authority for managing the Senior Executive Service (SES), including their developmental assignments exceeding 120 days, details, and Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) assignments. Beyond this, authority is decentralized and delegated to operating organizational levels so that ongoing activity is conducted by those officials closest to and having the best knowledge of competencies required to accomplish the work functions of the Agency.

b. The Associate Deputy Administrator for Institutions and Asset Management, Institutional Program Offices, NASA Center Directors, and the Director of Headquarters Operations are responsible for providing leadership, direction, and resources to ensure required employee and organizational development activities support both the near- and long-term needs of the Agency.

c. The Assistant Administrator for Human Resources is responsible for providing overall executive leadership and strategic policy direction for Agency employee and organizational development programs. The Assistant Administrator for Human Resources retains the authority to grant a waiver of the Agency's right to recover repayment or consider the recovery amount from an employee who fails to fulfill the terms of the continued service agreement for training in excess of \$25,000 for corporate-sponsored and -funded courses (such as NASA Fellowships and Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program). The repayment of training costs consists of the necessary expenses of the training, including travel and per diem costs.

d. Institutional Program Offices are responsible for ensuring that training and developmental activities are appropriately funded, properly supported, and conducted within established policies and guidelines at the NASA Centers.

e. Center Directors are responsible for managing their Center's resources for training in accordance with financial accounting requirements. Center Directors should budget for and use training resources to create a diverse workforce and to improve organizational and individual performance, including allowing the use of funds to pay for an academic degree, credentials, and licenses, where appropriate. Center Directors are also responsible for considering requests for waivers of continued service agreements for their Center employees, as defined in section 5.k.

f. The Director, Training and Development Division, Office of Human Resources, NASA Headquarters, is designated the functional manager for all NASA individual and organizational training, including design, development, and conduct of programs, training and development policy, Agencywide training funds administration, corporate learning activities, individual development programs, review of foreign training requests, and Agency program oversight. The Director also chairs the NASA Executive Development Education Panel, which reviews and ranks nominees for the Agency's Leadership Development Programs.

g. The Executive Development Education Panel is composed of representatives from the Enterprises, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, the Office of Headquarters Operations, and each NASA Center. The Panel is responsible for reviewing, evaluating, and ranking nominees for the Agency's Leadership Development Programs and recommending candidates to the Chairperson, Executive Resources Board.

h. All managers and supervisors jointly share with their subordinates the responsibility and accountability for their development and training. Managers and supervisors determine the job-related knowledge, skills, and competencies that employees need to effectively accomplish the organization's work. They are also jointly responsible with their subordinates for assessing current capabilities, determining near- and long-term development and training to enhance employee performance, and preparing Individual Development Plans (IDP) that support job requirements to include timely completion of supervisory and management training, career goals, and Agency needs.

i. The Director, Personnel Division, Office of Human Resources, NASA Headquarters, serves as Executive Secretary of the NASA Executive Resources Board, which oversees and coordinates the SES system for executive development.

j. NASA Center Human Resources Directors and/or Human Resources and Organizational Development (Training) Officers are responsible for developing and implementing employee and organizational development programs at the operating organizational levels. They are responsible for providing technical advice and human resource development functional support to their Center managers and for providing required information to the Agency Human Resources Information Systems Office for purposes of Agency program planning and evaluation. They may authorize a full- or part-time planned academic degree training program to address identified systemic Agency needs linked to specific Agency strategic goals.

k. Center Training Officers are required to obtain a signed continued service agreement prior to their employees' participating in both Center and Agencywide training or developmental programs in excess of 80 hours. Upon consideration of requests for waivers, Center Directors are authorized, for their respective Centers, to grant a waiver of the Agency's right to recover repayment to NASA for time not served by an employee, as outlined in the signed continued service agreement for all Center- sponsored training and for Agency-sponsored training less than \$25,000. Center Directors may redelegate further to a lower organization level for repayment costs that are less than \$10,000. Costs in excess of \$10,000 may not be redelegated more than one level below the Center Director. Center Directors will establish procedures for recovery of training costs for courses that are not successfully

completed by their employees. Repayment of training costs consist of the necessary expenses of the training, including travel and per diem costs. Center Directors will establish procedures to enable the employee to request a waiver of the recovery amount or a portion of it. Center Directors may consider waiving recovery of the training expenses in circumstances where recovery of repayment would be against equity and good conscience or in the public interest, such as movement to another Government agency, skills/ competencies possessed by the employee are readily available in the organization, or similar reasons.

l. NASA employees selected for training in excess of 80 hours must agree in writing with NASA, before assignment to training, to continue in the service of NASA for a period at least equal to three times the length of the training period. If the employee leaves NASA before the agreed-upon amount of service, the employee may be required to proportionally repay NASA for time not served. The Agency may decide that it is in the Government's interest not to require repayment if the employee leaves NASA for the service of another branch in the Government. In circumstances where travel is required as part of the training or development program, this reimbursement will also include expenses incurred by NASA in supporting the employee's travel and per diem.

m. The heads of the HQ Functional Offices that manage Headquarters Agencywide functions are responsible for providing direction for satisfying regulatory and legislatively or administratively mandated training associated with their functional responsibility. They serve as advocates for the resources required to respond to these mandates and to provide technical guidance for the design, development, and delivery of training activities in support of their functional requirements.

n. The Assistant Administrator for External Relations is responsible for reviewing all requests for foreign training, including developmental work assignments, confirming the eligibility of any proposed training facility with the Department of State, and determining whether the training is compatible with current foreign policy objectives.

## 6. Delegation of Authority

Pursuant to the Government Employees Training Act, 5 U.S.C. § 4101 et seq., the Administrator hereby delegates to the responsible officials mentioned above, the authority to fulfill the duties set forth in the responsibility section above.

## 7. Measurements

The Training and Development Division will monitor NASA-wide metrics on training and development activities that contribute to the achievement of Agency human capital goals, as described in NASA's Strategic Human Capital Plan and the SHCP Implementation Plan. All Center training offices and the Headquarters training office should regularly monitor evaluation data from training courses. Further, training offices are encouraged to use a wide range of training and development measures, including number of supervisors completing their required training within the targeted timeframe, number of training instances per NASA employee, number and types of training offered, percentage of employees receiving training, number of employees meeting training goals identified in their Individual Development Plans, and, wherever possible, linkages between training and productivity improvement/cost savings.

## 8. Cancellation

NPD 3410.2D dated July 7, 1997.

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**/s/ Sean O'Keefe**  
**Administrator**

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**Attachment A: (Text)**

**(URL for Graphic)**

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